



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
FIRST RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION
FIRST MARINE DIVISION
BOX 555584

In reply refer to:
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From: Commanding Officer, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion
To: Distribution List

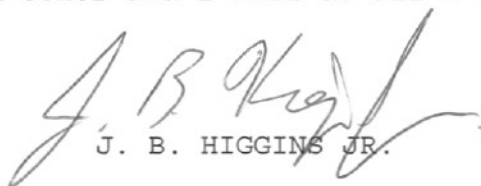
Subj: COMMANDING OFFICER GUIDANCE

1. During my time in the Marine Corps I have observed many different types and styles of Command. And while all intend to do the same thing, ie accomplish the mission I have identified several traits that in my opinion are critical in separating the ordinary from the extraordinary units. It is my belief that if these simple ideas are adhered to the Battalion will function optimally and you will understand what my expectations are for the Battalion.
2. Communication. For any organization to work efficiently communication is a critical requirement. Both up and down the chain of command it is essential that information and ideas get pushed. I will work my hardest to ensure that information I receive gets quickly passed down the chain of command and I would ask that questions, concerns, and ideas you have get pushed up to me. No one has the market cornered on good ideas and it's critical for every Marine to know that his ideas and concerns matter and are taken seriously.
3. Consistency. One of the biggest frustrations I have experienced during my career is either the reality or the perception of a lack of consistency from higher headquarters. In this Battalion I will strive to make decisions in a consistent manner showing no favoritism to race, rank, service, or MOS. And while every case is admittedly different, every effort will be made to establish clear parameters for what is expected of the Marines and what the consequences will be for unmet expectations.
4. Coordination. Reconnaissance Battalions today are operating in a unique and highly challenging environment. With the creation of MARSOC, deployment cycles that bring together units from across the Marine Corps and expose us to joint, coalition, and local Iraqi forces, in addition to many other ongoing changes within the community there is a requirement for total and continuous coordination with other units and agencies. Detailed and continuous coordination is extremely difficult, but not impossible. It requires both tenacity and tact. Finally, once you believe that coordination is complete, it is probably time to check the status once again. Bottom line -

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coordination never really ends and is often the grease required for successful mission accomplishment.

5. Camaraderie. Throughout history many units within the Corps have become known for going above and beyond the call of duty and accomplishing things that seemed impossible. As Marines we all receive the same basic training whether at Boot Camp or Officer Candidate School, yet some units seem to develop a cohesion or esprit de Corps that separates them from the pack. One of the finest examples of this can be found in the book "Gates of Fire" which provides a glimpse into life as a Spartan warrior and how the training and warrior ethos they developed allowed them to accomplish the extraordinary. My intent for the Battalion will be to provide an environment that allows for the development of this type of camaraderie. While life as a Marine has a deadly serious aspect to it, it should also be fun. We need to be able to laugh at ourselves, to laugh at each other, and have time to reflect on the challenges we will overcome in the days ahead. These shared experiences are what will give us a common bond and an added edge when things may seem their worst.
6. In the months ahead there will be many challenges. Work hard, be positive and have fun. Being part of Recon Battalion is an opportunity of a lifetime. Take care of each other and I will do all I can to take care of you.



J. B. HIGGINS JR.